The Backwash Effect of "Etic" on College English Learning of Agricultural Undergraduates

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ABSTRACT. *Because of the country's "Belt and Road" and "Rural Revitalization" Initiative the education quality of agricultural undergraduate talents is also closely connect with the national development. This paper discusses how to use the construct of "ETIC" to guide the teaching task design, so as to improve the students' comprehensive English application ability. In this process, we should pay attention to the task design of oral and written communication, in order to make sure that the task is as close to the real context as possible, and finally test the specific backwash effect through the "ETIC" test.*

KEYWORDS: *Etic;Agricultural undergraduate; Backwash effect; The university english*

1. Introduction

In recent years, in order to meet the "Belt and Road" construction, rural revitalization and other national macro initiatives, the country has paid more and more attention to the improvement of the quality of talent training in colleges and universities, and issued relevant documents to clearly put forward the training objectives. In addition, specific ability training objectives are proposed for the needs of international talents. Some authoritative institutions have even developed the Chinese English Ability Scale to describe the language ability to understand and express in a hierarchical manner [1].*The Outline of the National Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development Plan* (2010-2020) and *The Guide to College English Teaching* also clearly pointed out that China needs to cultivate international talents with English critical thinking ability, intercultural communication ability, international vision and ability to participate in international affairs [2].

So, the research team introduced the English Test International Communication (ETIC), with its construct to innovate task design in college English teaching, to burst the restraints in training students' analysis ability to solve problems in English with ETIC basic level materials. In order to enrich the task interaction of online learning platform and strengthen the auxiliary role of learning platform for students'

independent learning, both oral and written real tasks were taken into account.

2. Introduction to Etic Construct

The basic problem to be solved in a language test is construct definition, which tells what abilities will be tested [3]. Generally, it is divided into three perspectives: trait perspective, behavioral perspective and integration perspective. The trait perspective emphasizes the assessment of language competence, while the behavior perspective emphasizes the real characteristics of examination tasks.The integration perspective aims to measure the ability to use language in specific situations.The "ETIC" adopts the integration perspective, avoids the contradiction of the first two perspectives, and emphasizes the ability to use language in specific situations (Chapelle 1998) [4]. The specific task types are shown in the table below.

Oral communication test		total	Written communication test		total
Task 1	contact Establishment	5	Task 1	material Browse	5
Task 2	Chat record	8	Task 2	material Analysis	8
Task 3	Business Contact	7	Task 3	Material organization	7
Task 4	Product description	1	Task 4	Material composition	1

The most valuable part of "ETIC" is to evaluate the language competence of the examinee both orally and in writing. Its "Primary Level" test is mainly used to evaluate and recognize the ability of college students and social personages to use English in daily reception and familiar workplace. Oral communication gives full consideration to the communication in real life and enables students to demonstrate their English expression ability in a real context; Task 1 of the written expression section assesses the ability to grasp the general idea of the paragraph; Task 2 assesses the ability to read key information; Task 3: students need to understand the original text and fill in the missing information; Task 4: according to the given situation and KEYWORDS, students are required to complete about 50 words of email writing to show their ability of written expression.

3. Integrate National Talent Examination Intoteaching Task Design

Guided by the integration perspective, combined different language materials, oral communication is focus on memorization and comprehension of language knowledge, and advocate that communication skills should be cultivated in the language tasks of real context. Besides, the written communication, combined with the new standard teaching materials, English news stories and culture, etc., makes a written task design close to the practice of college students' life to exercise their ability to analyze and solve problems.

For example, the Critical Thinking and Talking Point exercises in the New Standard Integrated Course Book have been redesigned to be verbal tasks with real-life scenarios that must be combined with the student's specialty; Select 80% of the text paragraphs to practice summarizing paragraph idea, and make preparation for the first three tasks of written communication; Select some units of the writing

exercise to modify theminto "ETIC" Task 4 type;Each unit selects a paragraph for students to recite to improve their ability to grasp the sentence structure, laying a foundation for oral communication task 1.

Choose simple sentences in the Passage and Conversation exercises in Viewing, Listening And Speaking Course book for students to repeat and dictation.Repeat sentences by listening the former ones in the Conversation. Read the sentences with different lengthsin the Passage. Choose the introductory recording and ask the students to record the basic information.

4. Contrast and Analysis of Backwash Effect

Adopting new task design and using XueXitong App to assign tasks, students' interest in learning are aroused, with 4578 students' visits in one semester. Taking task training for a semester, we let the students do the "ETIC" elementary No. 4 test paper. In order to ensure the number of people who participate in the test and the effect of teaching research, this test and the usual task completion are counted into the usual score.

The final result shows that the experimental class has a higher score than the regular class on the whole, and the advantage of oral communication is not as obvious as that of written communication. The specific results are shown in the following table.

Class	size	Oral Communication Task			Written Communication Task			
Experimental	145	Task1	Task3	Task4	Task1	Task2	Task3	Task4
86-100	0	10.8	1.5	3.3	58.4	36.4	5.9	4.9
71-85	5	5.3	68.4	33.7	12.6	35.1	44.2	66.2
61-70	24	1.8	8.8	38	17.4	6.7	0	10.5
0-60	116	82.1	21.3	25	11.6	21.8	49.9	18.4
Regular	122	Task1	Task3	Task4	Task1	Task2	Task3	Task4
86-100	0	0	0	0	23.3	10	0	0
71-85	0	0	27.3	3.4	26.7	30	20	30
61-70	2	0	9.1	34.5	6.7	10	0	13.3
0-60	120	100	63.6	62.1	43.3	50	80	56.7

From the overall data in the above table and the data of each task type, it's easy to find that the experimental class is significantly improved compared with the conventional class, which indicates that the construction design of the national entrance examination indeed has a positive backwash effect on students. The first three are oral communication tasks, and there are more zero points in the regular class. One of the reasons is that the directions of the task were misunderstood that theywrite down the answers instead of recording them. The students in the experimental class showed courage, confidence, content and loud in oral communication. Experimental class is superior to the conventional class in written communication, especially on Material Analysis and Material Sortation, in which students are required to use more advanced ability to analyze problems, make comprehensive comparison, and choose the best answer. The situation of the regular class indicates that they need to improve their high-level critical thinking ability

through task design on the basis of low-level critical thinking abilities, such as memorizing and understanding.

5. Conclusion

At present, the English Test for International Communication has become the best test means to assess and select talents with international communication skills. As college English teachers, we must know how to test students' intercultural communication ability, ability to analyze and solve problem, namely, critical thinking ability. Applying the construct of "ETIC" into daily teaching is helpful for us to improve teaching task, and further improve the role of college English teaching in the cultivation of critical thinking ability.This paper is based on the research subject of China Language Assessment, which studies the backwash effect of "ETIC" to the students of agricultural university. Data in this paper can explain the positive backwash effect, but the study also need further refinement, such as the analysis of the detailed questions associated with the students to take a look at why different students' performance on the same task.In addition, the author found that some students in the experimental class pay too much attention to details when writing cet-6 compositions, which is the negative effect from practical writing training in this study, which needs further data to confirm.

Acknowledgments

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